

Ding

Department of Philosophy
University of Arizona
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SPECIALIZATIONS	Metaphysics (esp. Social Metaphysics); Political, Social, and Legal Philosophy; Trans and Feminist Philosophy
COMPETENCIES	Ethics (incl. Biomedical Ethics); Logic; Social Epistemology
EDUCATION	Ph.D. in Philosophy, University of Arizona, May 2025 (expected) Dissertation: <i>On Our Own Terms: Equality and the Social Meaning of Bodies</i> Advisors: Thomas Christiano and Jason Turner (co-chairs), Suzanne Dovi (political theory), and Sara Bernstein (external) B.A. in Philosophy, <i>summa cum laude</i> , The Ohio State University, 2019
ARTICLES	“Pregnant Persons as a Gender Category: A Trans Feminist Analysis of Pregnancy Discrimination,” <i>Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society</i> 50.3 (Spring 2025)
IN PROGRESS	[Paper on the relationship between gender and gender identity] (R&R)
PUBLIC WRITING	“Gender, Equality, and Feminism through a Philosopher’s Lens,” interview with the University of Arizona College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, June 20, 2024 (invited Pride Month feature) “Putting Gender Back into Transgender Equality: On <i>Iglesias v. Federal Bureau of Prisons</i>,” <i>Blog of the American Philosophical Association</i> , September 21, 2023 (solicited for the Law & Philosophy Series)
TALKS (* = invited; all titles are current)	“Justice, Misgendered: Constructing Gender/Equality in American Law” Thinking Trans // Trans Thinking Conference, Lafayette College, March 2025 “Is Euthyphro a Man Because He Identifies as a Man?” American Philosophical Association, Central Division, February 2025 (virtual) “The Building Brick Theory of Gender: How Genders Are Just like Legos and What We Can Build with Them” Harvard University, Philosophy Colloquium, January 2025* “Gender from the Ground Up: Equality and the Metasemantics of ‘Woman’” Trans/Feminist Philosophy: Pasts, Presents, and Futures, Canadian Society for Trans Philosophy Founding Conference, August 2024 UCLA Linguistic Change Workshop, May 2024 (canceled)* “Taking Gender Seriously” American Philosophical Association, Central Division, February 2024

“‘Medical Diagnosis, Not Sex or Gender Identity’: Transgender Equality and the Neutral Application Loophole”

Association for Political Theory, November 2024

American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, March 2024

Workshop on Law, Ethics, and Political Theory, UCLA School of Law, November 2023 – *prize for the best graduate or JD student submission*

“On Our Own Terms: Trans Women Crafting the Meaning of ‘Woman’”

Queer AΦ Conference, University of California, Santa Cruz, April 2025

Seminar on Current Debates in Feminist Philosophy, University of Guelph, Canada, February 2024 (virtual pre-read class visit)*

USC-UCLA Graduate Conference in Philosophy, April 2023

“Pregnant Persons as a Gender Category: A Trans Feminist Analysis of Pregnancy Discrimination”

Harvard-MIT Graduate Conference in Philosophy, April 2023

American Philosophical Association, Central Division, February 2023

“Two Senses in Which Freedom Might (Not) Require Alternative Possibilities”

Workshop on Free Will and Agency, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, May 2020 (canceled due to COVID-19)

TEACHING

Instructor of Record

Sex, Gender, and Love: An Introduction to Social Philosophy (Spring 2025, 35 students; Fall 2024, 67 students, with a grader)

New introductory course developed for the university’s refreshed General Education curriculum (approved in January 2024)

Feminist Philosophy (Spring 2024, 18 students; Spring 2023, 36 students)

Law and Morality (Winter 2023, 41 students; Summer 2023, 23 students; Summer 2021 Sess. II, 14 students; Summer 2021 Sess. I, 38 students; Summer 2020, 13 students; all asynchronous online)

Logic in Law (Fall 2022, 14 students; Spring 2022, 10 students)

Medical Ethics (Fall 2021, 54 students)

Teaching Assistant

Contemporary Moral Problems (Michael McKenna, Fall 2023, 94 students, full teaching responsibility for guest module on the ethics and metaphysics of sexism)

Personal Morality (Carolina Sartorio, Spring 2021, 81 students)

Freedom, Equality, and Authority (Tom Christiano, Fall 2020, 71 students)

Mind, Matter, and God (Chris Maloney, Fall 2019, 153 students, 2 GTAs)

Undergraduate Honors Papers Advised

Morrigan Malloy (Feminist Philosophy, Spring 2023, the ethics of abortion)

Catie Holt (Medical Ethics, Fall 2021, patient autonomy)

Lauren Skyler (Medical Ethics, Fall 2021, the ethics of organ cloning)

SELECTED HONORS & AWARDS	<p>William H. Fink Prize for the overall outstanding graduate student, Department of Philosophy, University of Arizona, May 2024 (awarded to two graduate students for superb academic accomplishment over the course of graduate school)</p> <p>Julia Annas Graduate Teaching Award, Department of Philosophy, University of Arizona, May 2024 (awarded to two graduate students for outstanding teaching)</p> <p>Departmental Nomination, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award, University of Arizona, April 2024 (college-wide competition for which each department is limited to one nomination)</p> <p>Prize for the best graduate or JD student submission to the Workshop on Law, Ethics, and Political Theory, UCLA Program in Law & Philosophy, November 2023 (only student paper selected for presentation from nearly 100 submissions from scholars of all career stages)</p> <p>Co-Recipient, Emil R. Riesen and Austin H. Riesen Prize for the best essay by a graduate student, Department of Philosophy, University of Arizona, May 2020</p> <p>William E. Bingham Award for the best undergraduate paper in philosophy, Department of Philosophy, The Ohio State University, April 2017</p>
GRANTS	<p>Travel Grant, Graduate & Professional Student Council, University of Arizona, December 2024; February 2024; February 2023 (three highly selective grants of \$1,000 each for conference travel)</p> <p>Travel Support Fund, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, University of Arizona, October 2023 (selective grant of \$500 for the UA ethics bowl team's travel expenses)</p>
SERVICE	<p><i>Departmental</i></p> <p>University of Arizona Ethics Bowl Team, Co-Coach, Fall 2019–Fall 2021; Coach, Fall 2022–Fall 2023; Assistant Coach, Fall 2024–</p> <p>Guest Speaker, Undergraduate Philosophy Club, October 2024 & March 2022</p> <p>Volunteer, Ask-a-Philosopher booth at the Tucson Festival of Books, March 2024</p> <p>Panelist for session on teaching, Graduate Student Orientation, August 2023</p> <p>General Education Refresh Committee, Fall 2022–Spring 2023</p> <p>Organizer, Trans Feminism Reading Group, Summer 2022–Fall 2022</p> <p>Organizer, Feminist Philosophy Reading Group, Spring 2020–Summer 2021</p> <p><i>Professional</i></p> <p>Arizona Feminist Philosophy Graduate Conference, Co-Organizer, Fall 2019–Spring 2024; Lead Organizer, Fall 2024–</p> <p>Session Chair, APA Pacific 2025 & APA Central 2024</p> <p><i>Referee</i></p> <p>Journals: <i>European Journal of Political Theory</i>; <i>Journal of Applied Philosophy</i>; <i>Journal of Social Philosophy</i>; <i>Politics, Philosophy & Economics</i></p> <p>Misc: Bloomsbury Academic (book proposal); Arizona Feminist Philosophy Graduate Conference (27 papers); University of Arizona Graduate & Professional Student Council (20 grant proposals)</p>

COMMENTS	<p>Yana Stoykova's "Swimming Upstream Together: Catharine MacKinnon's Alternative to Consent," 6th Arizona Feminist Philosophy Graduate Conference, February 2025</p> <p>April Chan's "Love for the Unborn," 5th Arizona Feminist Philosophy Graduate Conference, April 2024</p> <p>Lauren Perry's "A Victim by Any Other Name? A Speech Act Analysis of Victim-Blaming," 4th Arizona Feminist Philosophy Graduate Conference, April 2023</p> <p>Joan O'Bryan's "Uncovering an Idealist Ontology of Patriarchy: Patriarchy as a System of Meaning in Beauvoir, Butler, and MacKinnon," 3rd Arizona Feminist Philosophy Graduate Conference, March 2022</p> <p>Anastasiia Grigoreva's "Nonbinary Russians: The Excluded by Robin Dembroff's Account of Genderqueer," 2nd Arizona Feminist Philosophy Graduate Conference, May 2021 (virtual)</p> <p>Dee Payton's "Ameliorative Projects in the Philosophy of Gender," 1st Arizona Feminist Philosophy Graduate Conference, February 2020</p>
DISSERTATION ABSTRACT	I present an account of transgender equality as an element, requirement, and condition of gender equality, which I defend on the grounds that it resolves long-standing conceptual and methodological problems that continue to frustrate feminist theory and politics today. Taking emerging doctrinal issues in U.S. constitutional law as my point of departure, I argue that an empirically, explanatorily, and normatively adequate treatment of transgender equality in particular and gender equality more broadly needs to take seriously <i>both</i> the gender (the social metaphysics) <i>and</i> the equality (the political and legal philosophy) of gender equality, not just one or the other. The upshot is that transgender equality not just poses difficult challenges to, but more constructively sheds precious light on, our understanding of the meaning and requirements of gender equality.
REFERENCES	<p>Thomas Christiano Professor & Head of Philosophy University of Arizona <i>Committee Co-Chair</i></p> <p>Jason Turner Professor of Philosophy University of Arizona <i>Committee Co-Chair</i></p> <p>Sara Bernstein R.L. Canala College Professor of Philosophy University of Notre Dame <i>External Committee Member</i></p> <p>Nora Berenstain Professor of Philosophy Chair, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Interdisciplinary Program University of Tennessee, Knoxville <i>External Reference</i></p> <p>Suzanne Dovi Professor of Government & Public Policy University of Arizona <i>Committee Member</i></p>

Michael McKenna
Professor of Philosophy
University of Arizona
Teaching Reference

*Please direct requests for letters of recommendation to Ms. Sandra Kimball, Program Coordinator,
at skimball@arizona.edu.*

Last updated: February 28, 2025